

Notes from the South Central Federation Meeting

September 2022 – Red Lodge

1. What is the greatest benefit of the federation to you and your library? To your library patrons?
 - a. We get money – mentioned several times
 - b. Networking with colleagues
 - c. Chance to connect with MSL and Commission/MSL report – mentioned several times
 - d. Book kits – mentioned several times
 - e. For our patrons – access to information and library resources, money takes care of things that local taxpayers don't have to cover, and directors and board members are more engaged which leads to better service.
2. What is missing for your patrons and/or your library when it comes to the structure of the federation or the services it provides?
 - a. It's clunkier. The federation doesn't have the same vitality.
 - b. We need to look at what isn't being provided locally or statewide that might be better provided by federations.
3. What would you change about the current structure or funding of the federation?
 - a. Annual report process is clunkier than when libraries just sent their report to the coordinator.
 - b. Could federations be good regional places for library advocacy?
 - c. Could board members become advocates?
 - d. Group wanted to hear the federation history
 - e. There is a disconnect between having a federation board made up of trustees and the legislative intent which involves things that are carried out by library directors.
 - f. What is the role of board members in federations? What is the role of directors?
4. The legislative intent listed in the Montana Code Annotated is "It is the policy of the legislature to encourage the most efficient delivery of library services to the people of Montana. To that end the state should be divided into regions within which libraries desiring to participate in the distribution of such state funding to libraries as may be available from time to time shall organize into library federations to pool resources and information and avoid duplication of effort."
 - a. Is this still relevant? Why or why not?
 - i. We don't know. Torn between value of statewide efficiencies and handiness of regional structure.
 - ii. Pooling resources and avoiding duplication is still relevant.
 - b. Does the current structure/funding of federations support this intent? Why or why not?
 - i. Yes, it does through book club kits. It helps libraries participate in statewide programs.
 - ii. Others weren't sure if the structure currently supports this intent.